

A  
 REVIEW  
 OF THE  
 STATE  
 OF THE  
 BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, July 30. 1709.

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**W**HEN in Defence of our Stock-Jobbers and *Exchange-Alley* Highway-men, some Gentlemen are pleas'd to think I am too free with their Characters, and charge them with practising upon the Nation and upon the Government, to pick Mens Pockets upon Rumours, baring Air and Emptiness, for Families and Fortunes, harping the World, and making the whole Town their Cullies: Let them read but the short Abridgment following, as it affects the Affairs of this very last Week, and blame me if they can—And when I have related the Circumstance, I shall be very plain with some of the Gentlemen.

I have no Quarrel with the Persons of one of these Gentlemen; and wholly unconcern'd, if they have any at me—They are terrible People in their Way—*Qua* Stock-jobbing—And the whole Body of publick! Credit trembles at their assassinating Hands—But as to their Hands, their Threatnings—*Ridiculus Mus!* I shall talk to it afterward—But to return to my History of ten Days.

We have been since last *Saturday* without a Post from the Army; the last Letters suggested, that upon the Taking of *Tournay*, the Confederate Army, leaving the Siege of the Cittadel to be carry'd on by 12000 Men only, would march immediately to.

to attack the Marechal *De Villars* in his new Encampment, before he had finish'd the Lines, he was with all possible Diligence casting up.

During the three or four Days, before our Sons of Art had upon the Capitulation of the Town of *Tournay* reported very warmly, that the Peace was coming on again; that the Marechal *De Villars* had sent to the States Field-Deputies to demand Passes for Monsieur *Torcy* and Monsieur *Rouille* to come again to the *Hague*; that the French King would sign the Preliminaries, and that those two Ministers were actually in the French Army *Incognito*—— I noted in my last, that not one Word of all these Things were true, and made an Essay to show you, that it cannot be true——That you cannot now go upon the Foot of the Preliminaries, if the French King would sign them—— For the Time of Truce or Cessation of Arms granted in the said Preliminaries being expir'd, and the Nature and Reason of that Cessation being not only alter'd, but destroy'd, by the Lapsing of that Period—— The Confederates cannot renew that Cessation, the Foundation of it, *which was the having so much of the Campaign good to force the Performance of the other Articles*, being irrecoverably taken away—— And therefore they must actually begin a new Treaty—— And instead of Security by Towns for the evacuating *Spain*, and Time to be allow'd for Performance, they must now treat upon actually doing, what was before only stipulated to be done—— Nor do I see any *Medium*—— For to give Time now to have it done, is to give up the Campaign, and give the King of *France* till next Year to do it, since the Winter is a natural Cessation of Arms, and the Enemy has all that Time to take Breath, and refuse you.

Upon this Foot, I think, it is not enough to say, THEIR NEWS is not true, but really it cannot be true—— However, so much of it as they wanted they had; for the Noise of it, *which was all that was needful*, being rais'd, and according to Art roll'd up in true *Exchange-Alley* Politicks, gilded with the Credit of coming from Sir *H*——, and Sir *William*——, and made rational enough to the Capacity of those, whose

Faith is made to follow, and not to lead—— The Thing serv'd to all the Uses it was design'd for, and the Stocks immediately rise 5 to 8 per Cent. upon it—— Tho' as I often noted, and still maintain, a Peace, if actually made, ought rather to sink, than to raise the Value of those Stocks which depend upon Interests of Money, such as Banks, Annuities, Tallies, &c. And this I undertake to demonstrate by just Calculations, as well as by Experience.

Having thus rais'd the Stocks, and no doubt SOLD OUT, as they found Opportunity immediately without any Post, any Express, or any Possibility of its coming, Pidgeons and Dæmons excepted, we have a new Alarm of a Battle in *Flanders*, and that we are worried. Now it would be hard to charge this on particular Men, and therefore I'll only fix it on the Place—— Poor unhappy *Exchange-Alley*! The Place is as honest as other Places, but like *Drury Lane* or *Whetston's Park*, curs'd only for its Company. Now, tho' no Stock-jobber had any Hand in this Report, *which it will be very hard to make any Body believe*, it is very plain, there's not a Man had the News, but had this ready Answer to the common Question of, Where had it you? (*Viz.*) 'Tis all the News in *Exchange-Alley*—— Every Body can trace it into *Exchange-Alley*, no Body can trace it out again—— nor did it spread much farther—— Every Body brought it away with a Taint of the Place, it had the Curse of its Nativity along with it—— The *Stigma* of the Place took away all its Reputation, for every Body broke in upon it, with such Questions as were natural to the Thing, and *Exchange-Alley* was the general Answer to it all. One crys—— *Is there a Post?* Answer, no,—— but they have it in *Exchange-Alley*. Has the Government any Express? — NO, but it is in every Body's Mouth in *Exchange-Alley*. Is there any Account of it at the Secretary's Offices? — NO, but 'tis all the News in *Exchange-Alley*—— Why, but how does it come? — Nay, no Body knows—— But 'tis very hot in *Exchange-Alley*.

And what is the Consequence?—— Go but to *Exchange-Alley*, you see it presently; Fools are wheedl'd, Cowards fear'd, and

and Stocks fall; the Partisans of the Project whisper it eagerly into the Ears of every Man of Apprehension, spread it about diligently; and what follows? Stock falls immediately—And they that SOLD OUT before, BUY IN now—And the Stroke being struck, the News falls of Course—And now to it again.

Having bought in the Stock, and the News grown stale from *Monday to Tuesday Night*; on *Wednesday Morning* they start another Hare—A new Report, that the Duke of *Savoy* has attack'd the Duke of *Berwick*, routed his Army, and he is kill'd, say some; wounded, say others; Prisoner, another—But all agree, he is defeated entirely, and this is to raise the Article again, that so what has been bought in cheap, may be sold out dear.

Now, Gentlemen, either this is Picking of Pockets, or it is not; if it is not—pray, give me some other Name for it—And tell me, what *forging Foreign Intelligences, raising false Rumours, reporting false News, calculating these Things to the raising and sinking the publick Stocks*, in order to buy and sell, ought to be call'd—For my Part, I see the Cheat of it as clear as the Day, and I profess to be a plain Dealer, I shall never cover such Practices with fine Names.

*Tho' they're call'd Misses, which leud Men adore;*

*I cannot gild their Crimes, a WHORE's a WHORE.*

I have been prompted to take Notice here of some Personal Threatnings, which I have receiv'd, some by Letter, and TWO by Message, upon the Liberty I take with the Practices of the Stock-jobbers—Indeed I have always thought those Things not worth Notice—Always believing, he that is Bully enough to threaten a Man behind his Back, is too honest to mean what he says. For

*The Cur that barks, is ne're the Cur that bites.*

But my Answer is very short, and I hope just; I am sure, 'tis better natur'd than the Parties it relates to; I take the People, I am talking of, to be made up of three Sorts. The *First*, conscious of the Truth, cannot find in their Hearts to BEAT ME for telling it. The *Second*, being Men of Temper, and something better principled, than Assassination requires, want Gall for it. The *Third* want Courage, and dare not do it—And among the last, I reckon those two in particular, who had the Impudence to promise—but have not thought fit to be as good as their Words.

## MISCELLANEA.

I Offer'd you in my last an Argument against the Possibility of employing the poor *Palatines* in *England*, by Reason of the Difficulties in our Constitution arising from Parochial Settlement—I can see no Way to master this Difficulty in the Case of common employing them, and I think verily, our People, who are so uneasy about them, and who look on them, as I once noted, as a Cloud or Storm hanging over their Heads, ready to break with Violence upon their several Occupations, and deluge their Industry, may be easie and unconcern'd, for it cannot that Way be done—And this has occasion'd my

Return to the Consideration of this Case again.

It is impossible, that ever these People can be dispers'd and employ'd in our Manufactures in *England*, as some People apprehend—If you will plant them, or colonise them, as one calls them, well and good; and I still affirm, notwithstanding a blushing Gentleman sends me word it is unintelligible, I still affirm, I say, that if they are thus planted, they shall be so far from lessening the Employment of our own People, that they shall encrease it—The Circulation of Trade being such, which I perceive, he does not or will not understand, that every

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Thing worn in *England*, I mean, bought and sold to be worn, goes through ten Hands at least, between the Maker and the Consumer.

There is another Reason, which in Charity to the poor People should be of some little Moment to us, to separate and entirely disperse them, would be barbarous—They are come over Strangers, they are now in Families, and Branches of Families, relatively joyn'd, tho' separate; if you will disperse them, you rob them of the only Comfort left them, and the Opportunity to assist and cherish one another—I shall not however insist on the Inhumanity of this, since it is not the darling Virtue of this Age.

But I must tell you, on the other hand, that this will not do—And the Consequences will be intolerable, both to us and to them—To them in the Case above—But more particularly in the following Case.

Suppose these poor People dispers'd, and by the Accidents of their Employment, as by Services or Securities of single Persons, which may after be insufficient, they get Footing among our Parishes, and after come to Distress, then they fall to the Parishes, and raise a just and an universal Clamour upon us, *not upon them*, tho' they'll feel the worst of it.

Again, when dispers'd to work, but left without Legal Settlement, and that Work or Employment fails, what will become of them? If they fall into Want, or Sickness, and Distress, the Parishes won't help them, they cannot help themselves; if they can't work, they perish; if they can, your Poor will rabble and abuse them, and not let them work—They must either come back to the QUEEN, which is leaving them just where you find them, and doing nothing, or they must turn Vagabond, and fill us with Beggars, and that such as You cannot by Law pass from Place to Place, or Parish, and be starv'd in your Streets.

These are the Difficulties and Negatives of the propos'd settling these People; I shall offer at some farther Expedient in this Case in my next.

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